

Nehemiah. You say, 'He was a cup-bearer in the Palace of Shushan, and it was a grand place.' So it was. The hall of that palace was two hundred feet square, and the roof hovered over thirty-six marble pillars, each pillar sixty feet high; and the intense blue of the sky, and the deep green of the forest foliage, and the white driven snow, all hung trembling in the upholstery. But, my friends, you know very well that fine architecture will not put down homesickness. Yet Nehemiah did not give up. Then when you see him going among these desolated streets, and by these dismantled towers, and by the torn-up grave of his father, you would suppose that he would have been disheartened, and that he would have dismounted from his horse and gone to his room and said: 'Woe is me! My father's grave is torn up. The Temple is dishonored. The walls are broken down. I have no money with which to rebuild. I wish I were dead.' Not so says Nehemiah. Although he had a grief so intense that it excited the commensurate of his King, yet that penniless, expatriated Nehemiah rouses himself up to rebuild the city. He gets his permission of absence. He gets his passports. He hastens away to Jerusalem. By night, on horseback, he rides through the ruins. He overcomes the most ferocious opposition. He arouses the piety and patriotism of the people, and in less than two months, namely, in fifty-two days, Jerusalem was rebuilt. That's what I call busy and triumphant sadness.

My friends the whole temptation is, with you,

#### WHEN YOU HAVE TROUBLE,

to do just the opposite to the behavior of Nehemiah and that is to give up. You say, 'I have lost my child and can never smile again.' You say, 'I have lost my property, and I never can repair my fortunes.' You say, 'I have fallen into sin, and I never can start again for a new life.' If Satan can make you form that resolution, and make you keep it, he has ruined you. Trouble is not sent to crush you, but to arouse you, to animate you, to propel you. The blacksmith does not thrust the iron into the forge and then blow away with the bellows, and then bring the hot iron out of the anvil and beat with stroke after stroke to ruin the iron, but prepare it for a better use. Oh that the Lord God of Nehemiah would rouse up all broken-hearted people to rebuild.

Whipped, betrayed, shipwrecked, imprisoned Paul went right on. The Italian martyr Algerius sits in his dungeon writing a letter, and he dates it 'From the delectable orchard of the Leonine prison.' That is what is called triumphant sadness. I knew

#### A MOTHER WHO BURIED HER BABY

on Friday and on the Sabbath appeared in the house of God and said, 'Give me a class; give me a Sabbath-school class. I have no child now left me and I would like to have a class of little children. Give me real poor children. Give me a class off the back street.' That, I say, is beautiful. That is triumphant sadness. At three o'clock this afternoon, in a beautiful parlor in Philadelphia—a parlor pictured and statuted—there will be from ten to twenty destitute children of the street. It has been so every Sabbath afternoon at three o'clock for many years. These destitute children receive religious instruction, with cakes and sandwiches.

How do I know that that has been going on for many years? I know it in this way. That was the first home in Philadelphia where I was called to comfort a great sorrow. They had a splendid boy, and he had been drowned at Long Branch. The father and mother almost idolized the boy, and the sobs and shrieks of that father and mother as they hung over the coffin resound in my ears today. There seemed to be no use praying, for when I knelt down to pray, the outcry in the room drowned out all the prayer. But

#### THE LORD COMFORTED

that sorrow. They did not forget their trouble. If you should go on the snowiest winter afternoon into Laurel Hill you would find a monument with the word 'Walter' inscribed upon it, and a wreath of fresh flowers around the name. I think there has not been an hour all these years winter or summer, when there was not a wreath of fresh flowers around Walter's name. But the Christian mother who sends those flowers there, having no child left,

Sabbath afternoons gathers ten or twenty of the lost ones of the street. That is beautiful. That is what I call busy and triumphant sadness.

Here is a man who has lost his property. He does not go to hard drinking. He does not destroy his own life. He comes and says: 'Harness me for Christian work. My money's gone. I have no treasures on earth. I want treasures in heaven. I have a voice and a heart to serve God.' You say that that man has failed. He has not failed—he has triumphed. Oh, I wish I could persuade all the people who have any kind of trouble to

#### NEVER GIVE UP.

I wish they would look at the midnight rider of the text, and that the four hoofs of that beast on which Nehemiah rode might cut to pieces all your discouragements and hardships and trials. Give up! Who is going to give up, when on the bosom of God he can have all his troubles hushed? Give up! Never think of giving up. Are you borne down with poverty? *A little child was found holding her dead mother's hand* in the darkness of a tenement house, and some one coming in, the little girl looked up, while holding her dead mother's hand, and said: 'Oh I wish that God had made

#### MORE LIGHT FOR POOR FOLKS.

My dear, God will be your light, God will be your shelter, God will be your home. Are you borne down with the bereavements of life? Is the house lonely now that the child is gone? Do not give up. Think of what the old sexton said when the minister asked him why he put so much care on the little graves in the cemetery—so much more care than on the larger graves, and the old sexton said, 'Sir, you know that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven,' and I think the Saviour is pleased when He sees so much white clover growing around these little graves.' But when the minister pressed the old sexton for a more satisfactory answer, the old sexton said, 'Sir, about these larger graves, I don't know who are the Lord's saints and who are not; but you know, sir, it is clean different with the bairns.' Oh, if you have had that keen, tender, indescribable sorrow that comes from the loss of a child, do not give up. The old sexton was right. It is

#### ALL WELL WITH THE BAIRNS.

Or, if you have sinned, if you have sinned grievously—sinned until you have been cast out by the Church, sinned until you have been cast out by society, do not give up. Perhaps there may be in this house one that could truthfully utter the lamentation of another:

Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell—  
Fell like a snowflake from heaven to hell—  
Fell, to be trampled as filth in the street—  
Fell, to be scoffed at, spit on and beat—  
Praying, cursing, wishing to die,  
Selling my soul to whoever would buy,  
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,  
Hating the living and fearing the dead.

Do not give up. One like unto the Son of God comes to you today, saying, 'Go and sin no more,' while He cries out to your assailants, 'Let him that is without sin cast the first stone at her.' Oh! there is no reason why any one in this house, by reason of any trouble or sin, should give up. Are you a foreigner, and in a strange land? Nehemiah was an exile. Are you penniless? Nehemiah was poor. Are you homesick? Nehemiah was homesick. Are you broken-hearted? Nehemiah was broken-hearted. But just see him in the text, riding along the sacrilegious grave of his father, and by the Dragon well, and through the Fish gate, and by the King's pool, in and out, in and out, the moonlight falling on the broken masonry, which throws a long shadow at which the horse shies, and at the same time that moonlight kindling up the features of this man till you see not only the mark of sad reminiscence, but the courage, the hope, the enthusiasm, of a man who knows that Jerusalem will be rebuilt. I pick you up today out of your sins and out of your sorrows, and I put you against the warm heart of Christ. 'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.'

#### Select Notes.

BY J. B. LAIR

—A young girl is sentenced to two years imprisonment for stealing a canary bird, not worth over two dollars. A man 'gets' 12 years for killing his wife; and another 'gets' two years for stealing a

horse, and this is called 'Justice.' It will be different by and by: the Prophet says 'a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute.'

—Some peculiar man recently made a will to the effect that 'on the day of his wife's second marriage she should receive \$10,000.' I have known circumstances where the widow should receive a stipulated dowry, for her own use so long as she remained the widow of the author of the will. Here are conditions in each of these wills. The one could not enjoy the provisions of the will until she married—The other could not enjoy them after she did marry. It is not reasonable to suppose that either should enjoy the provisions of the will without complying with the conditions. I have before me a Will made for the benefit of all who are willing to comply with its behests, the will is now in full force, and any and all can become heirs to the immunities of the will by complying to the conditions, and cannot see any other way to become an heir, except by strict compliance to its conditions. Yet I look around me and I see many, very many, who are not willing to comply with the conditions of the will. I find those who have no regard for it at all, they do not seem to care to become heirs of the will, they seem disposed to have no connections with it whatever, while others, seem to desire to be heirs and to receive its benefits, but they seem to be inclined to make their own conditions to heirship, they are not willing to comply with the full conditions, thinking that all are not necessary yet they claim an heirship. I find still others that are not satisfied with the conditions of the will, so they go to work and add a codicil, and they then make and teach that as a part and parcel of the will, claiming authority to add it, and then make it a part of the conditions of heirship. Then I find a few, only, comparatively a few, who are willing to comply with the will, all of its conditions and nothing more.

Now I ask all, who, or which class do you think are the ones who become heirs to the will. The one woman in the narrative cannot enjoy the benefits of the will until she marries, and if she never marries she cannot receive its benefits; the other one is deposed whenever she does marry. Hence we see that it is a compliance with the conditions of the will that brings benefits, and those who do not comply, cannot reasonably hope to be benefited by the will at all. 'Think on these things!'

—The Apostolic church degenerated into the Catholic church in the beginning of the fourth century, under Constantine—and all know how that church compares to a Gospel church to-day; yet they lay claim to being THE church. It seems to me that there are others who have degenerated from the Gospel, who ought to learn a lesson from the example above stated. It is however to be feared that they are already led so far in the ways of tradition, that their recovering is impossible. What a pity that such people—well meaning people cannot profit by examples!

—It is said of W. Collins, that he is a very painstaking writer. He revises his Mss. seven times before it goes to the printer. I have wished often that I had time to revise mine once before it went to the printer.

—I have been reading in 'The Family Manual,' how to take stains out of linen, Kid gloves, out of carpets, and off of furniture &c, and among all the receipts I cannot find one that is given to take a stain from character. I wonder if people who write receipts don't know, or whether they think it of no importance, or possibly they think the means not obtained. The one sure means is the blood of the Lamb.

—I often notice in Sunday School reports, how many verses of Scripture have been committed to memory by the children. Now can you tell how many verses they understand? Pray tell me, what good is the committal, if it is not understood. One verse understood is better than a whole chapter committed, and not understood. Might there not be some improvements made in this thing—eh?

—I have heard extravagant claims made for the authority of the church based on John 20: 23, but I notice this was to apply to the disciples, and I believe to the disciples only. Some passages of Scripture are fearfully perverted, by those who would arrogate to themselves or the church; more authority than the Scriptures warrant.